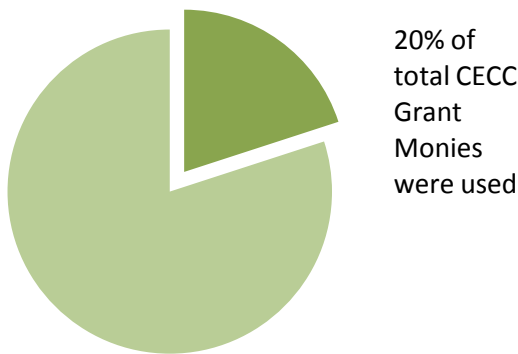


Strategic Use of Mini-Grants: Examples and Suggestions

The Governor's Office of Early Childhood uses the Community Early Childhood Council RFAs each year to explore various aspects of the ways in which grant monies are used. This year, our office conducted a short study about the strategic use of mini-grants from the 69 Councils that applied for FY2013. The following information is provided after consideration of these key parts of the RFA, where strategies on the usage of mini-grants should be explained: proposed budget, work plan and the project overview.

The Governor's Office of Early Childhood defines **strategic** as the successful argument for the importance of mini-grants in a community, as part of the overall RFA project outcome(s).

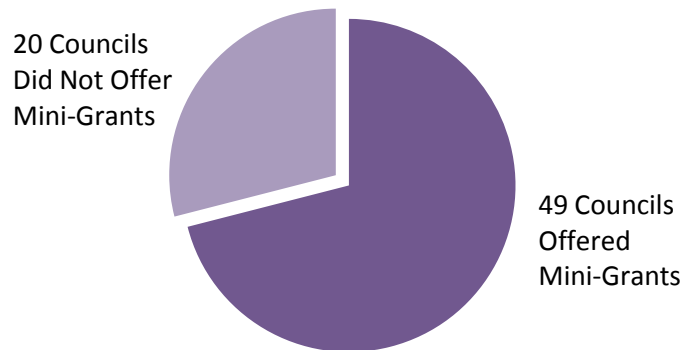
How much money went toward Mini-Grants this year?



It is the goal of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood to encourage CECCs to use their grant money in a strategic manner. The most important thing to remember about including mini-grants in your FY2014 RFA is to ensure that your mini-grants are a strategic part of your proposal. Last year, the only requirement given by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood was that not more than 40% of your total grant funds could be dedicated to mini-grants. This year, if your council chooses to offer mini-grants, part of your overall RFA score will be whether or not your use of mini-grants is strategic.

In order for your use of mini-grants to be considered strategic, your mini-grant plan should be innovative, collaborative and share common outcomes with the rest of the projects in your FY2014 RFA.

How many councils offered Mini-Grants for FY2013?



There are many examples of Community Early Childhood Councils strategically using mini-grants at different funding levels, located across the state and where mini-grants were used in different capacities. The following RFA snapshots are presented as five unique examples of strategic mini-grants.

Fully Funded Council, Mini Grant Budget 22%

Goal: Improve Early Literacy

Explanation: Aside from requirements/administrative explanations, council effectively applied all projects, including mini-grants, to early math/literacy.

Pro-Rated Funded Council, Mini Grant Budget 40%

Goal: Improve Early Language/Literacy

Explanation: This council presented a clear plan that had one goal, including the mini-grants for their centers.

Fully Funded Council, Mini Grant Budget 18%

Goal: Family Engagement

Explanation: Each activity surrounds the goal Family Engagement, these mini-grants are given to all programs as an incentive to host a family night, not just materials for STARS Centers.

Pro-Rated Funded Council, Mini Grant Budget 12%

Goal: Promote Successful Learning Environments

Explanation: All activities clearly explained as leading back to environmental improvement, including PD, training and family engagement.

Fully Funded Council, Mini Grant Budget <1% = \$2000

Goal: Multiple, Organized Around a Set of School Readiness Goals

Explanation: Council clearly delineated their use for mini-grants to improve care in their community, alongside other goals. Small amount shows not of high importance.

Note: These snapshots do not include every example of strategic use of mini-grants.